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FRIDAY, DECEMBER 3, 1897.

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THE UNITED STATES FISH COMMISSION.

ACCORDING to law the United States Fish Commissioner must be a man of 'proved scientific and practical knowledge of the fishes of the coast.' If President McKinley judges that Mr. Cleveland violated the law in appointing to the position the cousin of a prominent Democratic politician, having no previous scientific knowledge or practical experience in the work, retired from the navy owing, it is said, to rheumatism, aggravated by sea air, and if further the incumbent has not during the past two and a-half years acquired 'scientific and practical knowledge of the fishes of the coast,' then it is the President's duty to remove the present Commissioner and make a new appointment according to the requirements of the law.

We think that the President could best secure information on the subject by appointing a committee of men of science to make a report on the conduct of the Fish Commission during the past two and a-half years. The National Academy of Sciences is the legal adviser of the government on scientific questions, and a commission consisting of President Gibbs, Mr. Agassiz and President Jordan could make a report, the